21-1943

FWA Reinstates Negro USO, Health Center Projects

Clarksville, Tenn., April 8—(Special)—Both the Health Center and the Negro USO hall have been reinstated by the Federal Works Agency, Mayor William Kleeman said Wednesday.

The War Department at first declined to approve the colored hall and the Health Center was placed in a lower classification because of the vital materials it required. Reinstatement of the two projects virtually assures their construction, Mayor Kleeman said.

The Health Center, to be built on the McGhee property on Main Street between Third and Fourth will cost approximately $40,000. It will be used by the Montgomery County Health Unit and will be for white men and Negroes. It will include six wash rooms, two for white, two for Negroes, and two for employes.

The Negro USO building will cost approximately $18,000.

U. S. FUNDS DENIED RACE TRADE SCHOOLS

Chicago Defender

Charge Louisiana Bars Federal Aid To Run Negro Training

Chicago, Illinois

By LEON LEWIS

NEW ORLEANS, La. — A discriminatory use of federal funds for education in the state of Louisiana, together with the complete absence of trade school training for Negro public school students were disclosed in an investigation of the state's educational system last week.

It was found that $451,285.50 was spent for eight white trade schools in the state. Of this mount, $34,939.14 was from federal government funds.

Greatly inferior to the type of training offered at these schools, several Negro training schools are scattered throughout the state that only touch on some of the trades necessary in industrial education. The Booker T. Washington high school in New Orleans, primarily intended to be a school for apprenticeship in the several trades fell far short of its set mark in meeting the requirements of such school.

No Trade Training

In the white trade school operated by state and federal funds, 117 teachers receive salaries from $1,654 to $2,500 annually. There is total enrollment of 3,197 students. The state maintains property and equipment valued at $2,243,696.03 for these white schools.

To supplant the lack of state supported trade training for Negro youth, many private schools and the federal government have established war training schools in some centers. Educational leaders the state over view 'he camouflaged trade training in the several parish training schools as the most convicting evidence of Louisiana's warped educational system and the most pronounced discriminatory usage of federal funds and state public tax moneys.

Other advantages and facilities enjoyed by white students of the state of Louisiana and not offered for Negro students include public school libraries and business training. A few of the Negro public schools have libraries of the most inferior type and these are supported by the schools themselves. Many of the Negro libraries in the elementary schools boast of volumes of comics and play books and the few Negro high schools that have libraries at all are merely make believe.

The annual report for the 1942 session revealed that there are 1,109 state operated libraries in white elementary and high schools in the state comprising 1,169,486 volumes of books. There was no report for volumes in Negro schools. In elementary white schools there are 660,422 volumes and in high schools (white) 467,868 volumes.

CONGRESS KILLS NYA

Courier Pittsburgh, Pa.

JUL 10 1943

WASHINGTON, July 8 — A House of Representatives revolt, led by a coalition of poll-tax Democrats and a solid bloc of reactionary Republicans, was able last week to kill NYA, by denying it continued appropriations for the next fiscal year and to badly cripple the Office of War Information, despite efforts of the Senate to restore appropriations for these agencies.

The liquidation of the NYA means that some 200 Negro staff members under the direction of Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, in charge of Negro work for the NYA, will lose their jobs in the next two weeks and that tens of thousands of Negro youth in various sections of the country will be denied further aid in training for war jobs.

RESTORES PART OF OWI FUNDS

The Office of War Information is not so badly hit by Congressional action. Its news department, including the Negro desk, in charge of Theodore F. Poston, will continue to function, but there will be no further publication of pamphlets similar to the "Negro and the War," which was used by Republican congressmen to stir up anti-Negro sentiment among Southern Democrats. Liquidated also are special sections of OWI dealing with motion picture and other media of morale building.

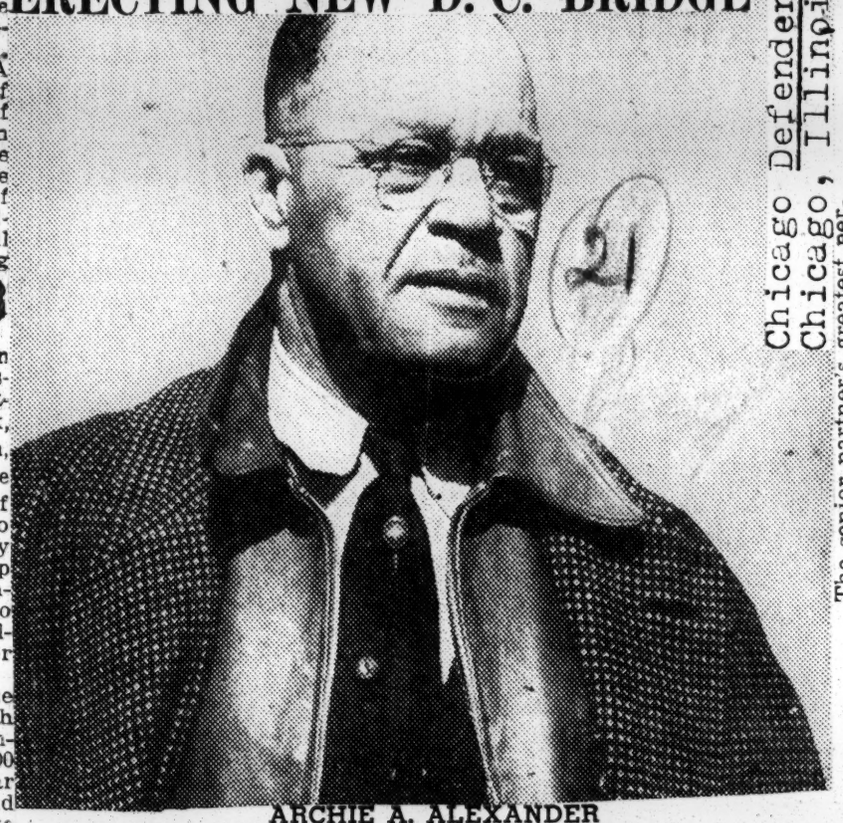
The fight against both of these agencies see-sawed back and forth all of last week. First the Senate restored a sum of $48,000,000 for NYA to continue another year and conferees of the House and Senate agreed to the Senate amendment. The House, last Friday, however, refused to agree to the amendment and sent the bill back to conference with instructions to their representatives to insist on liquidation of the NYA.

NYA HAS LIBERAL RACE RECORD

The Senate withdrew its amendment and agreed to the House proposal to allow the agency $3,000,000 with which to close its affairs. Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune left for New York last Saturday and could not be reached to comment on the death of her agency. It is known, however, that her office is preparing a record of its work which will show that hundreds of thousands of Negro high school, college and out of school youth have benefited through the NYA. Of all Government agencies, the NYA has the record of the most liberal and progressive treatment of Negroes.

The killing of NYA revealed a bitter below-the-belt fight carried on by Representative John Taber (Rep., N. Y.) against the agency. Taber, in the House Appropriations committee, made charges of interracial sex affairs among NYA enrollees at Auburn, N. Y. This attack is known to have lost the agency enough votes among Southern Democrats to defeat its appropriation. The same type of anti-Negro sniping was also used by Republican leaders to cripple the OWI. In this instance distribution on the floor of the House of the Negro pamphlet of OWI was used to inflame the Southern poll-taxers against the OWI appropriation. As a result, in order to save the agency, congressional administration leaders had to agree to a compromise sum far below the original amount asked.

ERECTING NEW D. C. BRIDGE



ARCHIE A. ALEXANDER

Senior partner in the firm of Alexander and Repass, Des Moines, Iowa, contractors for the million-dollar bridge being built across the Tidal Basin in Washington, D. C. Classmates and varsity halfbacks at the University of Iowa, Mr. Alexander, and Maurice A. Repass have been business partners for 28 years.—OWI photo.

Chicago Defender
Chicago, Illinois

Bridge Builder Alexander Bucked Prejudice And Won The Hard Way

WASHINGTON — Back in 1912 when Archie A. Alexander, a strapping varsity half-back, was completing an engineering course at the University of Iowa, one of his professors expressed doubt at his choice of a profession.

"Engineering is a tough field at best," the professor pointed out, "and it may be twice as tough for a Negro."

"Well," the half-back retorted, "none of us can tell what we can do until we try. And even then we must keep on trying."

One of Alexander's white classmates, Maurice A. Repass, disagreed with the professor. A varsity halfback also, he had worked with Alexander in the Iowa backfield and he thought they made a pretty good team.

Building D. C. Bridge

Today, 31 years later, they are still a pretty good team and the contracting firm of Alexander and Repass is one of the most successful in its field. Specializing in bridge, power plant, highway, and sewage disposal plant construction, the company has completed engineering and construction jobs throughout the country since its founding 28 years ago.

At present, the firm is building a bridge across the Tidal Basin at Washington, D. C. When completed for the District of Columbia's Highway Department at an estimated cost of more than $1,000,000, this bridge will extend from Fifteenth street and Independence avenue and connect with a driveway running along the Potomac. The structure will consist mainly of North Carolina granite and limestone.

Alexander, the senior partner, is supervising the Tidal Basin job which now employs 160 Negro and white mechanics and laborers and represents a capital investment more than $100,000 in cash and $90,000 in heavy machinery. The construction crew, which includes

The senior partner's greatest personal satisfaction, however, probably came from a job in 1928. In the partners have constructed of the bridges in their native that year, the firm of Alexander city of Des Moines, Iowa. Other and Repass completed a $1,000,000 major contracts' have included the contract at the University of Iowa erection of a power plant at Co- —and put to rest the last fears of lumbus, Neb.; the construction of the doubting professor that the color the airport for a civilian aviation of necessity, be a handicap to a competent engineer. program at Tuskegee, Ala., and the Although the firm has made no construction of a sewage disposal bank loans for more than five years, plant at Grand Rapids, Mich. Alexander believes that credit rating is of utmost importance in his

field. So firmly does he believe this that once, during the dark days of the depression, he drew $75,000 from his personal savings account and invested it in the business so that the firm could complete a contract on schedule.

Encourages Youths

Since the death of his only son, Alexander has made a hobby of encouraging other young Negroes to enter engineering and technical professions. He receives more than a hundred letters annually from Negro students in engineering schools seeking advice about their careers and job possibilities. He answers each of these letters personally, usually with some word of encouragement or advice drawn from his own long experience.

And when one of the youths seems discouraged, he remembers his old engineering professor and repeats the same words he used in 1912:

"None of us can tell what we can do until we try. And even then we must keep on trying."

Hilyard R. Robinson, Prominent Architect And Engineer, Uses Talents In Federal Construction

New York ...e
New York, N. Y.

JUN 5 1943

JUN 5 1943

When Hilyard R. Robinson, a promising young Negro student, quit the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Arts in 1918 to enlist as a buck private in the A. E. F., he had no idea that he was making the most important step in his career.

When Second Lieutenant Hilyard R. Robinson of the U. S. Field Artillery returned from Europe, however, he had definite thoughts on the matter. He was convinced that this wrecked continent would furnish the laboratory in which low-cost State housing and city planning would be developed. And he felt that American pioneers in this field should make use of that laboratory.

Robinson didn't get back to Europe until 1931—after extended study at the University of Pennsylvania, A.B. and M.A. degrees in Architecture at Columbia University, and more than a decade as head of the Department of Architecture at Howard University in his native Washington, D. C.

But he did go back. And the Federal Government, the War and Navy Departments and tens of thousands of underprivileged American families and war workers have benefitted from his intensive studies in Holland, Germany, Russia, Austria and the Scandinavian countries.

Pioneer in Federal Construction

Today, a pioneer and one of the leading architects in the field of Federal construction, Robinson has designed public housing projects costing more than $10,000,000. He has been architect and engineer on a $6,000,000 U. S. Army air base and school which has served as a model for similar airfields throughout the country. He has devised and patented a combination black-out and florescent light which is used, with modifications, by the War and Navy Departments and the Pennsylvania Central Airlines. And he is now completing plans for the construction of two war housing projects at Ypsilanti, Mich., which will bring needed relief to thousands of war workers in the giant Ford Willow Run plant, five miles away. These projects will be constructed by the Federal Public Housing Authority.

Many of Robinson's contributions to the war effort can be traced to his intensive studies in Europe. At the University of Berlin, he studied city planning; at Weimar, he delved into German airport technique and bombresisting industrial design and construction. In Vienna, he visited the largest State-created housing development in the world, the Karl Marx Homes, and in Russia, Holland, Denmark and the Scandinavian countries, he followed all new developments in public housing.

On his return, his experiences were immediately put to use. In 1933, he organized and directed the first slum-clearance housing survey in the Nation's capital. In 1934, he was appointed architect in charge of planning and design for Negro housing projects of the Subsistence Homesteads, U. S. Department of Interior. During the same year, he became consulting architect to the National Capital Advisory Committee for selection of slum clearance sites in Washington, D. C. And in 1935 he was named consulting and senior architect for the U. S. Resettlement Administration.

Robinson's first big low-cost dwelling job came when his firm, Robinson, Porter and Williams designed the $1,600,000 PWA Langston Housing project for 274 families, in northeast Washington. The design for this project was placed on exhibit and elicited widespread comment at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

New School Additions

Norfolk Va Pilot October 20, 1943

Even before the war congestion expanded the population of the Titustown Negro neighborhood, the Titustown School was inadequate for the community's needs. At present it is grotesquely deficient—a small, obsolescent school-house inherited, through annexation, from a parsimonious county treatment of Negro primary school needs. The FWA's approval of a grant of approximately $66,000 for the construction of a three-class-room addition to it, to be supplemented a $21,000 contribution by the city of Norfolk will correct, in part at least, a school deficiency which must be classed with the most glaring in the entire system. For a five-room addition to the Granby Street High School the FWA has approved a Federal allocation of nearly $50,000, the city to make a supplementary contribution of $15,800. Six years ago, when this school was in the debating stage, there were some doubts at the City Hall both as to the need for a school of this size and as to its location. The project, one of the last of the PWA series, was caught in a political log-jam along with the project for the completion of the Art Museum. They were rescued from the jam only when the Council recovered from the animosities generated by the political overturn of the period, and gave both projects the green signal. It is unpleasant to think of the greater jam the city would have found itself in had the Granby Street High School not been built in time to absorb the new pupil-population produced by the large residential developments along the Granby Street axis that were stimulated by the war congestion. The school building which, only four years ago, seemed adequate for the area's needs for many years to come, is now overloaded. It is overloaded not with a school population that will decline with the war's end, but with a school population permanently enlarged because it derives from residential developments that are themselves permanent.

The five-room addition now provided for will do no more than balance facilities with the present demand for them. The area which this school serves is among the fastest growing in the city. The present expansion will probably have to be followed by other expansions. Fortunately, the Council had the foresight to provide this school with plenty of space in which to grow.

FWA TO SUPPLY FUNDS FOR NEGRO SCHOOL

Albany, Ga. Journal

The Federal Works Agency in Atlanta told city representatives last week that federal funds may be obtained as much as 50 per cent of the cost of constructing part of a proposed Negro high school plant here in Albany. The only proviso is that the proposed building, when completed, would be used for a Negro recreation center for the duration of the war.

Oct. 29, 1943

This procedure followed after bids for converting an old CCC building into a recreation hall for Negro soldiers proved greatly in excess of available funds. Approximately $3,800 had been ear-marked for the work, where-s the lowest bid was in the neighborhood of $6,000.

C. Q. Wright, city manager, ...nd Commissioner J. W. Bush were the ones to confer with representatives of the FWA. The substitute proposal is to ect a brick building which later ill be used to house the home onomics department, the caferia and other units of the proosed Negro high school. Mr. right said Robert & Company preparing plans for the Negro gh school and the adjoining building. He said sketches of the buildings and an estimate of the cost of erecting the adjoining building will be in the hands of the commission today. He said the building will cost between $16,000 and $20,000.

A delegation of Negro citizens appeared befoe the commission to discuss a site for the proposed Negro swimming pool and park. The delegation included Hattie M. Reese, principal of the Madison High School, and the Rev. J. F. Carter. A tentative site was agreed upon depending on the city's ability to obtain the land.

The commission granted permission to the city manager, city clerk, and city attorney, and any member of the commission who desires to go to attend a meeting of the Georgia Municipal Association in Atlanta Nov. 10.

Norfolk Va Pilot
Novemb

City Seeking Funds For School Building

Preparations are being made by Supt. H. A. Hunt to file an application with the Federal Works Agency for the erection of a four-room annex to the Negro school in Truxtun.

Papers will be filed as soon as the temporary plans and the breakdown of costs have been completed by the architect.

Project To Be Located At 186 Sunset, NW
Daily World Atlanta, Georgia

$16,900 Approved; Recommended By FWA Director

Clinic for Negroes Planned

Clinic for Negroes to be Completed

Federal funds have been allotted for the remodeling and equipping of a building in the City of Atlanta to be used as a Venereal Disease

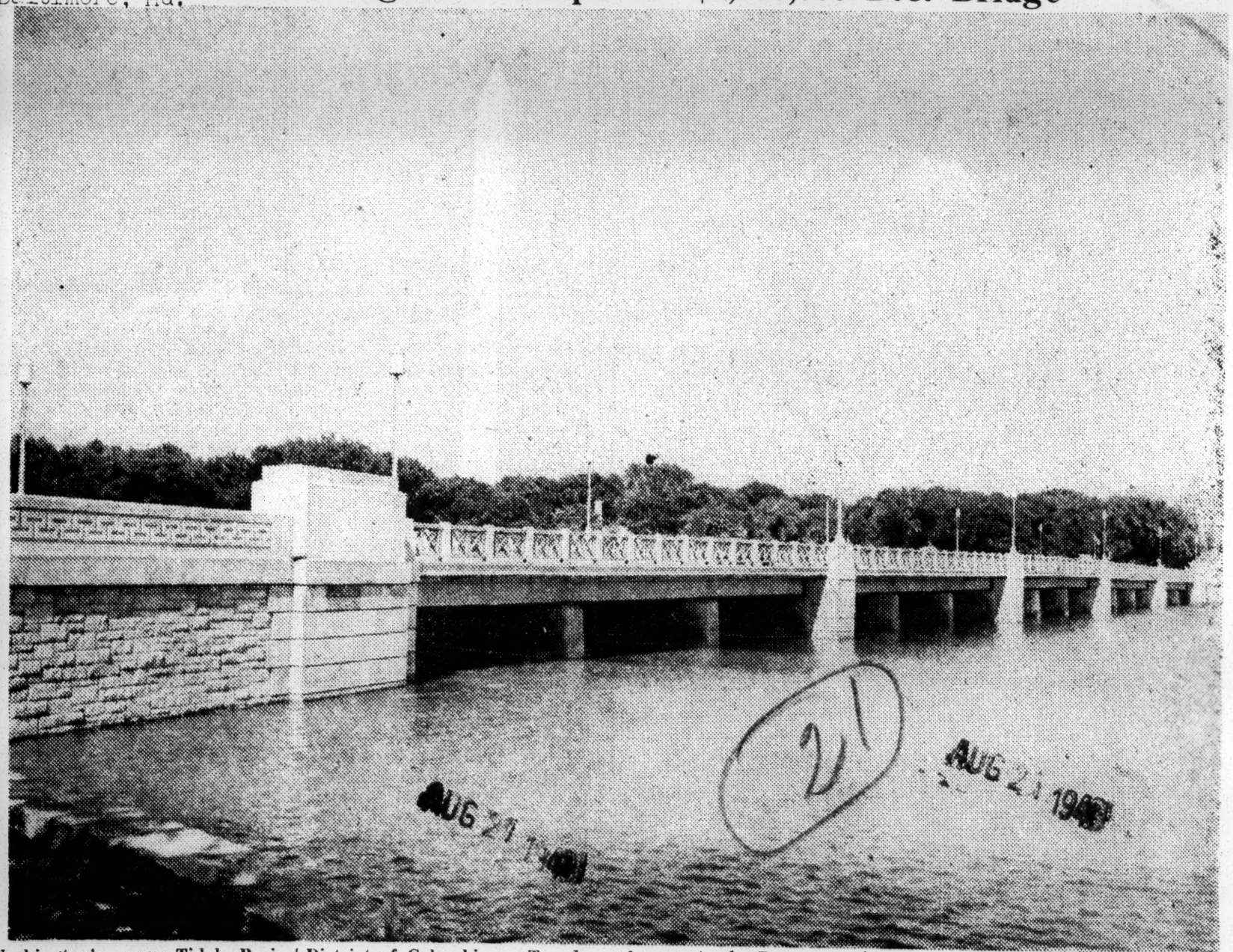
...ing to Oliver T. Ray, Regional Director of the FWA, who has just received notification of Presidential approval of the project.

The project, estimated cost $16,000, was approvd on the recommendation of the Regional Director. The biulding to be remodeled is a one-story wood frame structure, located at 186 Sunset Avenue, N. W., and, when completed this clinic, together with the facilities already furnished at the clinic at 11 Hunter Street, S. W., will provide an adequate program of treatment for venereally infected Negroes. These additional facilities are necessary because of the increased number of cases of syphilis in Atlanta.

21-1943

Afro-American
Baltimore, Md.

Colored Engineer Completes $1,000,000 D.C. Bridge



Washington's new Tidal Basin Bridge, constructed by the firm of Alexander and Repass, of Des Moines, Iowa, at a cost of $1,000,000, which was turned over to the District of Columbia on Tuesday, exactly one year after its construction was begun.

The bridge extends from Fifteenth Street to Independence Avenue to the Potomac Driveway and will relieve traffic congestion in the Tidal Basin area. In addition to the bridge, the construction includes a grade crossing and a sea wall opposite the Jefferson Memorial.

Archie A. Alexander, senior member of the firm, is a graduate of the University of Iowa.

TIDAL BASIN BRIDGE

Daily World

COMPLETED ON TIME

Atlanta, Ga. AUG

WASHINGTON — (SNS) — The $1,000,000 Tidal Basin Bridge, completed on schedule and opened to traffic more than a month ago, and the Independence Avenue Structures were turned over to the District of Columbia Tuesday, August 10, exactly one year after construction was begun on the projects.

AUG 10 1943

The structures were built by the firm of Alexander and Repass of Des Moines, Iowa. Archie A. Alexander, noted Negro engineer, is senior partner of this firm.

The projects in addition to the new Tidal Basin Bridge, include a grade crossing and a sea wall opposite the Jefferson Memorial in Patomac Park. The sea wall and bridge are constructed mainly of North Carolina granite and limestone.

Several months ago, the War Production Board ordered suspension of work on this project, but the order was rescinded when it was found that the job could be completed on schedule without the use of more strategic materials.

Archie A. Alexander and Maurice A. Repass, former varsity football stars at the University of Iowa and classmates in the School of Engineering, have been business partners for more than 28 years. The firm's first $1,000,000 contract called for the erection of several buildings and a heating plant at their ama mater. The firm has constructed half of the bridges in the Des Moines, Iowa area. Its other major contracts include the erection of a power plant at Columbus, Neb., the construction of an airport for a civilian aviation program at Tuskegee, Ala., and the building of a model sewage disposal plant at Grand Rapids, Mich.

Following completion of the D. C. job, the firm has begun the sale of more than $90,000 worth of heavy machinery used on the project. Part of this equipment has been purchased by contractors in such widely separated areas as Georgia, Illinois, North Carolina and Connecticut, Mr. Alexander stated.

The engineer praised Government officials with whom he worked on this job, and credited their cooperation with the firm's success in completing its contract ahead of schedule.

The new Tidal Basin Bridge, which relieves traffic congestion in a crowded governmental section of Washington, extends from 15th Street and Independence Avenus and connects with a driveway running along the Potomac. It also gives motorists a new view of the famed cherry blossoms in season and of other historic points of interest in that vicinity.

Defender
Chicago, Ill

Negro Pay Roll Totals 4 Million

JUL 31 1943

JUL 1943

WASHINGTON. — Negro construction workers on 656 war public works projects throughout the country have earned nearly $4,000 000 in wages since the beginning of the program, according to a report submitted this week to Maj. Gen. Philip B. Fleming, administrator of the Federal Works Agency, by W. J. Trent Jr., racial relations officer.

Wages paid to Negroes represented 19 per cent of the total payroll on these projects. Of this amount, more than $500,000 went to skilled mechanics.

More than one-third of the total payrolls on projects in the District of Columbia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi was earned by Negro labor. In South Carolina, Negro workers earned 24 per cent of the skilled payroll; in Kentucky and North Carolina, 14 per cent, and in Mississippi 12 per cent.

Under contractual provisions war public works contractors are required to employ Negroes in proportion to their availability in the communities in which the project is located. Monthly reports on racial employment are submitted to the Federal Works Agency. If a contractor has approximated the stipulated percentages it is accepted as prima facie evidence that he has not discriminated against Negro workers.